

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-18 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 4-14 stand rejected for the reasons indicated in the Office Action, claims 2 and 3 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, and claims 15-18 are deemed allowable. In response, claim 1 has been amended, claims 2, 3, 12 and 14 have been canceled and new claims 19-28 have been added. No new matter is added by these amendments. Entry of these amendments is requested.

With Respect to the Information Disclosure Statement, Page 2, Paragraph 2, of the Office Action:

Applicant notes that the United States Patent and Trademark Office is requiring a copy of PCT Publication WO 01/40756 A2. Submitted with this Amendment and Response is an Information Disclosure Statement Form PTO-SB/08A providing a copy of that publication in compliance with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2). Entry of this Information Disclosure Statement is hereby requested.

With Respect to the Drawings, Page 2, Paragraph 3 through Page 3, Paragraph 1, of the Office Action:

The drawings are objected to because the United States Patent and Trademark Office indicated that “functional blocks, such as 310 in figure 3 should include a label describing the function performed.” In response, Applicant notes that reference numeral 310 refers to a “flow-rate regulator (a flow-rate regulating element),” as indicated on page 12, line 24 of the Application. Therefore, reference numeral 310 does not refer to a “functional block” in any sense and no additional labeling is believed to be required. If the United States Patent and Trademark Office persists in this requirement for the element labeled 310 and for any other elements, the United States Patent and Trademark Office is requested to indicate what functional block it considers the reference element to be referring to based upon the disclosure of the application.

With Respect to the Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102, Pages 3-7 of the Office Action, and Allowable Subject Matter, Pages 7-8 of the Office Action:

Claims 1 and 4-14 are rejected for the reasons indicated on page 3, paragraph 2 through page 7, paragraph 3. Claims 15-18 are indicated as containing allowable subject matter for the reasons indicated on page 7, paragraph 4 through page 8, paragraph 1, and claims 2 and 3 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but otherwise allowable as indicated on page 8, paragraphs 3 through 5 of the Office Action. In response, claims 2, 3, 12 and 14 have been canceled and claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of originally filed claim 2. Claims 4-11 and 13 depend from amended claim 1. Additionally, new claims 19-28 have been added where claim 19 corresponds to originally filed claim 1 with the limitations of originally filed claim 3 added. Claims 20-28 correspond to originally filed claims 4-11 and 13, and depend from claim 19. Therefore, all pending claims 1, 4-11, 13, and 15-28 are believed to be in condition for allowance and an indication of such is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that all pending claims, claims 1, 4-11, 13, and 15-28, are now believed to be in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance is requested. If, however, there remain any issues which can be addressed by telephone, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any fees associated with this communication, if such fees are due, to Deposit Account No. 19-2090.

Respectfully submitted,

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